

May 20, 2021

Representative Bronna Kahle
Chairman, Health Policy Committee
N-896 House Office Building
P.O. Box 30014
Lansing, MI 48909

Re: Increasing organ transplants in Michigan via the HOPE Act

Dear Chairman Kahle and members of the Health Policy Committee,

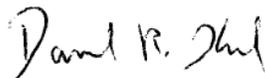
We are writing to express our support for proposed changes to the Michigan Health Code that would increase the supply of life-saving organs available to citizens in our state. These changes would remove language in the Health Code that prohibits using organs for transplantation from HIV infected donors.

For many years, federal law also prohibited the transplant of organs from HIV infected individuals due to concerns that recipients of these organs might contract HIV. The federal HIV Organ Policy Equity Act (HOPE Act) was enacted with the full support of the transplant community in 2013 and removed this prohibition. Since 2015, the practice of transplanting organs from HIV infected donors into HIV positive recipients has been allowed and has resulted in hundreds of life-saving transplants throughout the country. States that had similar prohibitions quickly changed their laws to allow residents of their state to benefit from the Hope Act.

Under the HOPE Act, everyone wins. Patients with HIV infection have the opportunity to get a life-saving transplant sooner since they can choose to receive an organ from an HIV infected donor but remain eligible for organs from HIV negative donors. Potential recipients who are HIV negative have greater access to HIV negative donors since the overall supply of organs has increased. In the current situation, HIV positive donor organs are now sent out of state and cannot benefit Michigan residents.

At the University of Michigan Transplant Center, our goal is to save the lives of as many Michiganders with organ failure as possible. We feel that the proposed changes to the Michigan Health Code will greatly benefit residents of our state with organ failure. We very much appreciate your time in considering these Health Code modifications. Please contact us if any questions arise at kauld@umich.edu or (734) 936-8183.

Sincerely,



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Director, Infectious Disease Training Program
Director, Transplant Infectious Diseases

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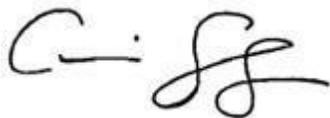
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